





AN  
APOLOGY  
FOR THE  
STUDY OF DIVINITY:  
BEING THE  
TERMINAL DIVINITY LECTURE  
DELIVERED IN BISHOP COSINS'S LIBRARY,  
BEFORE  
THE BISHOP, THE DEAN AND CHAPTER, AND  
THE UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM.

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BY  
HUGH JAMES ROSE, B.D.  
CHAPLAIN TO HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

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TO THE  
LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM,

BY WHOSE

PROVIDENT WISDOM AND MUNIFICENCE

A SYSTEM OF CLERICAL EDUCATION HAS BEEN ARRANGED

IN THE NEW UNIVERSITY OF DURHAM,

THIS HUMBLE ATTEMPT TO SHOW THE VALUE OF THE STUDIES

WHICH THAT SYSTEM WILL EMBRACE,

IS DEDICATED

WITH THE STRONGEST FEELINGS OF RESPECT AND GRATITUDE.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IT may be right to mention, that the Lectures for the Students in Divinity at Durham are given in private, and day by day. The present Lecture was delivered in consequence of the decision by the Dean and Chapter, that each Professor should give a Lecture of a more public kind in the course of every term. The Lecture comprised, as will readily be supposed, some observations on the study of Morals and Metaphysics, as indispensable for the Divine. But from fear of occupying too much time in the delivery, these passages were omitted. And as the Lecture is published by desire, it is thought better to print nothing which was not actually delivered. This will, it is hoped, explain what might otherwise appear a deficiency in the Lecture.

*March, 1834.*





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## LECTURE,

&c.

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My LORD BISHOP of DURHAM, our Visitor,  
My LORD BISHOP of ST. DAVID'S, and the rest  
of the Chapter, our Governors,  
Mr. WARDEN, and the rest of the University,

I MAY perhaps excite some surprise in your minds, when I say that the choice of a subject on which to address you has caused me very considerable embarrassment. Whatever other difficulties may arise, it would seem that a science so comprehensive as divinity must at least present an ample harvest of subjects for discussion. But it is in good truth its extent which causes the difficulty, and perplexes the choice. A single lecture cannot describe the variety of objects which the science embraces, far less give even the most meagre outline of

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them. I have, therefore, thought it better, on the whole, to avoid both the vain attempt to describe the extent of the study, and the great difficulty of selecting only particular points, and to address you on its dignity and value. Let me not be misunderstood. I am not wild enough to hope that in these days, even if I could speak with the tongue of men and of angels, I could convince the world that such a study deserves, and has a right to demand, the attention of *all* thoughtful and instructed men, however deeply I may be persuaded of the truth myself. I am well aware that the study which professes to discover nothing—I will not say which is not known to mankind at large—for that would be an undeserved compliment to the age) but which might not have been known for above eighteen centuries to all who would exercise their powers upon the subjects to which it relates, can find little favour in men's eyes. I have heard it indeed asked, with a mixture of scorn and triumph, what is there to be *done* in divinity? And when they who pursue it must unhesitatingly confess that in this sense they have no mines to explore, and no inventions to hold up to admiration, no victories to achieve, and no triumphs to win, they must be content to

hide their diminished heads in obscurity—to tread the silent and shady paths, and give up the broad way and the sunshine to the science of facts, which now walks abroad with the name of Philosophy boldly written on its brow. Neither do they refuse to submit to the sentence, nor account it a hard one. But yet the very instincts of our nature unquestionably teach us to seek for something like sympathy from others; and while we must not hope to entice any followers into our distant and unattractive region of thought and study, we would yet gladly show to those who may inquire, what reasons led us first to enter it ourselves, and what reasons lead us to rejoice at our decision. We would gladly give such reasons as we can for a choice which to some doubtless seems singular—such reasons as may save us from contempt, and may show that there is more to be said for our studies than had previously occurred to the captious inquirer.

Such remarks as these, can hardly occur to the mind without provoking very opposite feelings. To those who remember the history, and are acquainted with the literature, of other days, and with the studies by which the great men of those other days were formed, an apology for the study of divinity may, indeed, well provoke a

smile and a sigh. The smile will come uncalled, at finding how vain it is, to hope we can look to any quarter without coming upon marks of the entire change which has taken place in men's feelings and pursuits : the sigh is the result of an honest conviction, that vain as it may be to argue on the matter, that change is a subject of deep regret. Wonderful, indeed, is the change, if we pass in review the last two or three centuries, and the great men who adorned them. Look for a moment to the writings of one who is perpetually referred to by the votaries of modern philosophy, as its great parent and founder ; and who assuredly was not inclined to value the pursuits or the prejudices of past times, at more than their real value. Yet with all this disposition, Bacon speaks twice of divinity, as the "sabbath and port of all men's labours and peregrinations." And this he says, not incidentally, but formally, in treating of the various arts, to which men's minds are to be directed. On the first occasion he says, that he reserves divinity for the last of all, because it is "the haven and sabbath of all men's contemplations : " and he repeats the sentence, when having considered all other parts of learning, he advances to treat of this, as the highest.

and best. Nor was his a mere Platonic affection for divinity. The passage which concludes the second book of his *Advancement of Learning*, shows how fully he had weighed the subject, and how deeply conversant he was with the study.

Let us consider, again, a wonderful and much undervalued man of the same period—Sir Walter Raleigh; and learn from the first part of his great history, how thoroughly the soldier and the gentleman, who in his time aspired to eminence for learning, was familiar with the study; and how long his contemplations had rested on it.

Look again at a most learned (though I cannot say in all respects a very high-minded) man—Selden—a layman, a lawyer, so deeply versed in divinity, that he may well be placed among learned divines. Look at Sir Matthew Hale, at Locke, and at Newton, and with their fame and character in their respective branches of study, remember their great proficiency in “the haven and sabbath of all men’s contemplations.” I need cite no more instances to show that in other days, they who were the leaders in philosophy, in history, in jurisprudence, in metaphysics, and in mathematical science, confessed both in theory and in practice, the honour which



was due to theology ; or to prove that the study to which they gave so much of their best thoughts and brightest hours, gave them no reason to complain ; that it did not blunt their powers then, that it has not tarnished their fame now.

But this state of things has past away. It has been long passing. It is now utterly gone. To trace the causes which have led to its decay, may be the business of another lecture. Among many causes, perhaps the chief is to be found in our national character. We are anything, speaking generally, but a studious or a reading people ; and as wealth has been spread, and education with it, this national character has necessarily shown itself. While education was difficult to obtain, none would encounter the difficulties, but the comparatively few, who had a genuine love of study ; and they would form themselves, not on the model of the persons immediately surrounding them, but of those who, whether in this country or others, had given the highest tone and character to their respective pursuits. But when all are to be educated to a certain degree, not from any love for study, but because their station requires it, a different and far lower standard, will be immediately erected.

We cannot but measure ourselves with the mass of those who surround us, when they are, even nominally, engaged in the same pursuits ; and as this mass will assuredly be under the influence of the national character (*i. e.* in the present case will be practical men and not students), the active and practical character will, in a great degree, supersede the studious and contemplative. If, however, divinity *alone* had fallen from its high estate, the presumption, (always, I allow, a strong one, unless it can be explained), arising from a decided and continued expression of the general sense of mankind, would be against it. But this is not the case. It has not fallen alone, but has shared the fate of another study. There must be some, there may be many, here present, who remember the time, when it was reckoned among the highest praises which could be bestowed, as far as human accomplishments were concerned, to say, that a man was a *gentleman* and a *scholar*. The words, perhaps, like many other phrases, conveyed more meaning than is strictly found in them. They implied one who not only loved literature, and was widely acquainted with it, but one who partook of its refining and elevating qualities, one whose taste had been formed by familiarity

with the purest and best models, and whose imagination had been kindled, by the thoughts of the most mighty spirits, of all ages and tongues.

But however precious or valuable the character might be, the value for it, from without, is withdrawn, and the commendation once so justly, as well as highly prized, is rarely bestowed<sup>1</sup>. It would seem that the progress of things, latterly, has been so rapid, that if the torrent is not stemmed, in a very few years, the word *scholar* will fall as strangely on the ear, as a term of commendation, as the word *divine*. Yet if I may, without presumption, address myself to the younger part at least of my hearers, in opposition to the prevailing taste and fashion of the times, most earnestly would I exhort them not to be led away by it, but to remember

<sup>1</sup> Among many instances to which one might refer for a specimen of the low-minded notions now entertained as to education, perhaps none more striking could be found than an article on education, which has lately appeared in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. To say that it points out the proper way of educating a Heathen or a Deist would be doing gross injustice to both. It seems to *assume* that man is a mere animal, and cannot have any wants above those of the higher part of the animal creation.



that however dazzling by its novelty, and by the sense of power over material nature, which it may give, the study of science is not, if the *mind* of man is to be cultivated, the only, or the first object of thought; nay, perhaps may not in that point of view rank high in the estimation of the competent judge, however valuable and worthy attention when confined to its own sphere. I would intreat them to consider, that to know *things* may be easy, to improve the *mind* is very hard; that that improvement can never be effected by scattering the powers over a large surface, and knowing many things a little, but nothing well; that however tempting the scientific *slang*, if I may so term it, of the day may be, however tempting it may be to dazzle others and ourselves with a very free and ready use of the names of things, a learned jargon does not show a thoughtful or an enlarged mind; that we must, for any worthy purposes, have the courage to despise the temptation, and confess that we are, and must be, ignorant of very many things, in order to prosecute with proper attention, those which best deserve to be prosecuted. I would intreat them to weigh carefully, even the short and imperfect sketch which alone I can give of the objects and

aims, as well as the direct tendencies, of other pursuits.

It is natural, and it is indeed necessary for our present purpose, although we do not attempt to trace the causes, through which divinity and literature have ceased to enjoy public favour, to inquire by what other studies they have been succeeded, and on what ground the rival pursuits have been preferred. There are few cases in which, to use the happy phrase of that profound judge of human nature, Dr. South, the force and imposture of words have been more remarkably exerted. The ancient studies have been partly proscribed, as not sufficiently *practical*. A knowledge of what are called the *practical* arts of life, has been supposed to make us fitter for the exercise of the social duties and social character, than literature and divinity. To mention this shameless delusion is to expose it. Unquestionably chemistry, for example, is an art of great practical usefulness, of great usefulness in daily life, in increasing our luxuries and conveniences; but is it because he is deeply skilled in the science of definite proportions, or of chemical affinities, or because he can best teach me how to dye my coat of a brighter blue, or a deeper black, that the chemist will

venture to tell me, that he sees deeper than others into the laws which guide man as he is, and the laws best calculated to exhibit man as he ought to be; that he can best discern the evil which defiles the sinner, or appreciate the refined and elevated qualities which adorn the saint? If any one will fancy, for a moment, that he can discern the slightest connexion, between the knowledge which is to confer the power, and the power itself, he may ascertain the justness of his conclusions, by referring to the history of a neighbouring country, when the storms of anarchy were at their height. If there was any class of men, which propounded opinions more wild in theory—more unfeasible in practice—more ludicrous for their utter ignorance of human nature—and, at the same time, more detestable for the cruelties with which they would have disregarded all that is best and most valuable in it, in carrying their dreamy visions into practice—that class was the class of men of practical science. Their opinions and their deeds are a living monument, a speaking record on this point; for all men, whatever be their party, unite to speak of these men and of their fancies alike—as of something “too foolish for a fear, too wicked for a smile.” But it is not only that the study of

these arts *has* not led, but that there is nothing in it *calculated* to lead us to a better appreciation of human weakness and strength. The most, as far as I know, which has ever been said for these sciences, as they can affect the human mind, has been said by one whom I can never name without the strongest emotions of respect and regard. Mr. Whewell has declared his conviction, in one of his minor works, that habits of inductive reasoning are best learned from wide acquaintance with natural philosophy.

But let it be allowed, that the best example of it may be found in the great works of great natural philosophers, and that these works will therefore be an useful discipline of the mind, still it must be remembered that, as a part of education, they are here recommended only as a discipline to prepare the mind for other things, not as a good, on this account, in themselves; and that, even now, these works, not being written with this, but their *proper* view, viz. the prosecution of science, cannot present the principles required to the student, except at an expense of time, which cannot by many be afforded. As, for every person who wishes to partake of a *liberal* education, the *Elements* of Mathematics—some of those works, that is to

say, where the mind can learn to habituate itself to take nothing for granted, but to require proof of every step before it takes another—seem indispensably necessary ; so hereafter, when there shall be sufficiently short and well adapted elementary works, containing the principles on which physical investigations are to be conducted, and sufficient examples, they too, will fairly claim to rank as component parts of a liberal education.

But in any other light than this, how can they supply the place of what is gone ?

Let us remember what *man* is, with what faculties he is endowed, and under what awful responsibilities he lies for the use of them, nor for the use only, but for the progress and cultivation of them. Let us consider that the greatest accumulation of facts cannot advance their progress a jot or a tittle ; that if we can write down with precise accuracy the geometrical forms in which every chemical combination of matter will crystallize, or the points at which all the successive strata come to the surface, if we are deeply skilled in the most curious of modern discoveries, the doctrine of definite proportions, or any other of the wonders which the study of nature unquestionably reveals ; all these things, whatever



thir value—and I am not concerned, to dispute or deny it—do not advance the intellectual, far less the moral powers of man, in the slightest degree.

They are far more likely to mislead, than to lead us right in judging of man ; for they tempt us to apply the tests and standards supplied by matter into judgments of human actions, and to theorize about human nature, with all its countless modifications, insusceptible as they are of all calculation, with the same confidence as about the matter which we hold in our hands, and can mould to our own fancy—they tempt us, that is to say, to every thing that is weak, absurd, and mischievous. And they are likely to mislead us too by their variety, their novelty, and their ever fresh interest, to an entire miscalculation of the comparative value, of objects of study. When ingenuity has been racked to the utmost, for inventions to promote *commerce*, and *manufactures*, and to increase *luxury* ; when we have attained to an almost royal power over the elements which surround us, light, and heat, and air, how can we forget, that the last and brightest of our inventions, can benefit us only as it were for a moment. We are bestowing on passing and perishing things, the best faculties of an

unperishing spirit—wasting, if we are fully occupied on these things, the best member that we have, its gifts and graces, and the time expressly given for preparing them for communion with God ; in acquiring knowledge, the very subject of which will pass away, and the highest degree of which, if it indeed be precious, will in all probability be gained by intuition in that better country to which we are hastening. The paths of science, like the paths of glory, lead us to the grave : and to the disembodied spirit, what will be the value of a knowledge of the laws and properties of that matter, which it has quitted for ever ? How strongly and admirably has much of this been put by our great philosophical poet, Lord Brook<sup>1</sup>.

Music instructs me which be lyric moods,  
 Let her instruct me rather how to show  
 No weeping voice for loss of fortune's goods.  
 Geometry gives measure to the earth below ;  
 Rather let her instruct me how to measure  
 What is enough for need, what fit for pleasure.

She teacheth how to lose nought in my bounds,  
 And I would learn with joy to lose them all :

<sup>1</sup> In his exquisite poem, "Of Human Learning," p. 517, in Mr. Southey's *British Poets*.

This artist shows which way to measure rounds,  
 But I would know how first man's mind did fall,  
 How great it was, how little now it is,  
 And what that knowledge was, that wrought us this.

What thing a right line is, the learned know ;  
 But how avails that him, who in the right  
 Of life and manners doth desire to grow ?  
 What then are all these human arts and lights  
 But seas of errors ? in whose depths who sound,  
 Of truth find only shadows, and no ground.

Then if our arts want power, to make us better,  
 What fool will think they can us wiser make,  
 Life is the wisdom, art is but the letter,  
 Or shell, which oft men for the kernel take ;  
 In moods and figures moulding up deceit,  
 To make each science rather hard than great.

In lapse to God though thus the world remains,  
 Yet doth she with divine eyes in chaos'd light,  
 Strive, study, search through all her finite veins,  
 To be, and know, (without God) infinite—  
 To which end cloisters, cells, schools, she erects,  
 False moulds, that while they fashion, do infect.

Thus, till man end, his vanities go round,  
 In credit here, and there discredited ;  
 Striving to bind, and never to be bound,  
 To govern God, and not be governed :  
 Which is the cause his life is thus confused,  
 In his corruption, by these acts abused.



But we must look a little more nearly yet to this subject. Many who are not led away by the word *practical* to despise the studies which do not relate to the common arts of life, are yet deluded by the phrase so much in fashion just now,—*useful knowledge*.

No objection can reasonably be made to any use of words, of which fair notice is given before. Words are but signs of things, and if we explain what things we mean to represent by our signs, no one has a right to quarrel with us. It may be very absurd for me to call that *black* which other persons call *white*, but if I give fair notice of my intention, I am guilty of absurdity only, and not of absurdity and want of candour also. I entrap no man into false conclusions by the dishonest use of words, as he has been previously put on his guard. Questions of fact, when they involve praise or blame, are not very pleasant questions to handle, but should be avoided where they can with a good conscience, and on this ground I shall certainly avoid inquiring, whether they who have used the word *useful* so constantly have or have not taken care to explain in what sense they use it. To a moral inquiry, which concerns actions and not actors, the conduct of particular persons on par-

ticular occasions is a matter of inconceivable indifference. And for us it is only necessary to observe, that the word *useful* is a very dangerous word to use, unless it is previously defined in what sense exactly we take it. What is *useful*, in any large sense, it is beyond all question our duty to aim at, to value, to pursue; and it would consequently imply a bad state of the heart or the head to undervalue or neglect it. He, then, who presents *useful* knowledge to me, makes a claim on me which it may be wrong and sinful for me to disregard. But before I can submit to the imputation, I must examine into the validity and extent of his pretensions. The word *useful* is not a word of positive but of relative signification, and consequently I must know, in such a case, to what it expresses relation. The knowledge which instructs me how to make *a table, a coat, or a horse-shoe*, is beyond all controversy *useful* knowledge; but the relation here expressed is not, we may venture to say, very extensive. To those who can obtain these necessary articles when they want them, and devote their time to other purposes, it does not extend. This observation will carry us a good way, and there is another which will carry us farther. Not only is the word *useful* a

relative word, but when we have ascertained the objects of its relation, we must allow that to those who are included within it, it is not a positive, but a comparative word. Unquestionably, it is true, that there are many things which I am not required to make, and many acts which I am not required to do, about which it will nevertheless be very useful to me to have a certain knowledge. But it will be only *more* or *less* useful according to circumstances, and no general rule can by possibility be laid down.

To the gentleman who chooses to retain a score or two of acres in his own hands, a knowledge of agriculture would be very useful. But if he chooses to submit to the loss which ignorance may entail, because he can employ his time in what may appear to him more valuable pursuits, I do not apprehend that we can make out a very strong case against him as a despiser of useful knowledge. But to carry this matter higher. Not only is this word *useful*, relative and comparative, but even in these respects it varies according to the views of individuals. That which one man may pronounce useful to him, another under the same outward circumstances may wholly undervalue; or they may

differ extremely in the comparative value. Here then a wide field presents itself. In proportion as a man's views are wider or narrower, more or less sound, his judgment on such a question will command more or less assent. He may think that only *useful* which assists him in his particular occupation, or in his local station ; or again, that which promotes his success in life and advances his interests. Even this view will lead a man pretty far. A large range of scientific inquiry, a wide acquaintance with modern discoveries, and their application to increase the conveniences and comforts of life, are undoubtedly likely to gain great credit for their possessor ; or, what is perhaps more frequent, to gain him not credit only, but money. Science therefore, in this sense, will by such a man be reckoned decidedly *useful*. Or, again, he may be careless about worldly advancement, and care only for the cultivation of his mind. I know not whether the ordinary race of men would agree with such a person in the meaning of the word *useful*, or think anything *useful* which is not convertible to profit, either directly or indirectly. But if it be allowed that a wise man may not think it an unworthy employment of his time to enlarge his views and



store his mind without a prospect of making money by his acquirements, to such a man all knowledge which has that tendency is *useful*, and more or less useful as it tends more or less to encourage and enrich his mind. We have here advanced a vast step. There is, of a truth, a great distance between the man who has no idea that any thing can be useful which is not profitable,—who views all things, in short, whether he may allow it or not, through the medium of the market, and him who perceives the value of his own intellect, and wishes to do it justice. Yet great as this step is, what is it to the step which follows? No words can possibly describe the different views which the simple consideration of the immortality of the soul introduces into our consideration of the value of objects of knowledge. I may not be so contracted in my views as to think the knowledge of my own art the only useful knowledge;—I may not be so miserably sordid as to think no knowledge useful which will not put money into my coffers,—but, if the soul *does* last beyond the grave, how miserably may I still err in my estimate of the value of what I do know, how narrow and limited may be the boundaries which I shall never wish to pass. To me, if I expect to

perish in the grave, or if I have no clear and decided views of what will follow it, that knowledge which lifts my mind above this earthly state of things, which seeks to purify the heart, and so to exalt and extend the intellect, which reminds me that I am in all likelihood but at the very lowest step in the scale of created intelligences, and so makes me desire above all things a close communion with the source and fountain of all Intelligence, will be valueless, scorned, and rejected.

The meaning of the word *useful*, then, depends on the views of those who use it. And I shall venture to pronounce divinity an *useful* study in the very highest sense which can be affixed to the word ; useful, as leading us to the most intimate acquaintance with our own minds, and with mankind at large here ; useful, as leading us to thirst after no acquirements which will not be as enduring as the soul itself. It is useful, because every study to which it leads, and by which it prepares itself for its office, is, if worthily pursued, an *useful* study ; and because they cannot benefit the Divine, if not worthily pursued. It is in this especial view which I wish to present it, and to make the apology of those who study it on the express ground that

in any worthy or lofty sense of the word *useful*, they are pursuing, and as far as their powers extend, diffusing useful knowledge. And I will endeavour to put this at once on a plain and intelligible ground.

The proper study of mankind, it has been said, is *man*: and understood in a wider sense than the author meant them, these words rightly describe the most worthy aim and object of all human thought and contemplations. Man, as the creature of an all-wise Creator, the only one of his creatures which he originally formed in his own image and endowed with a spark of his own divine wisdom—man, as a being endowed with passions, thoughts, feelings, which under the controul and correction of their right guides, the Law and the Spirit of God, are capable of recalling him to that image of his Creator and carrying him on in an endless progress of holiness—man, as a being born, destined, and endowed for an immortal existence—man, as a being for whom not only all the glories and gifts of the earth on which he is placed, were called into existence, but for whom the yet higher and more surpassing wonders of redemption have been wrought—this race, with its capacities and its neglect of them, its powers and its abuse of

them, its faults and their remedies, its passions and their cure, is indeed the highest object to which the thoughts can be directed. For this study is the study of man as related to God; and thus necessarily leads the mind to the study of God, as far as it is possible and right, that man should pursue it, that is, as far as He has been pleased to reveal himself and his nature to us.

But I know not that, if sufficient comprehensiveness be given to the words, I could, in fact, describe Divinity better than by saying that it was the study of man as related to God. For it embraces every thing which relates to these objects, and it uses every study, so, and so only, as to make it subservient to this end. On these accounts it well deserves to be reckoned the most useful of all studies, and on this account it is, indeed, as Bacon calls it, the sabbath and haven of men's contemplations, the port for which in all their various studies and pursuits, they ought to make, and to which they ought to direct themselves with all their skill. He might have called it the mighty ocean into which all the petty streams of human knowledge are to pour their tributary waters; he calls it the haven, not only because he knows it to be the proper mark to which all who embark on the



ocean of human knowledge must, if they are rightly instructed, tend ; but because there alone they find rest : there their busy and anxious strivings are satisfied, and they are in the haven where they would be.

Let me now then proceed to direct your attention to a few of the principal departments of study which a Divine is called on to pursue. It would answer no particular end, on the present occasion, to pursue very regularly that order in which these various departments seem best to follow one another. I shall notice them in the order in which they occur to my own mind ; but I most earnestly request that it may be remembered, that I profess to do no more than to call attention to a few out of the many articles in the catalogue of the studies of a Divine. If from those it shall appear that we are justified in devoting heart, and thoughts, and affection, and time, and diligence to the study, all is done which was proposed, all which can be wished.

The first subject which occurs as one of the proper objects of the studies of a Divine, is the criticism and interpretation of Scripture. I put aside for the moment all consideration of the *matter*—its divine origin, its supreme import-

ance—and refer only to the studies necessary for interpreting this oldest and most singular, as well as best of books. I do not exaggerate, when I say that these alone are enough to exercise the highest intellect, and to consume the longest life. Consider that it is not enough to know the languages in which the book is written—and yet they must be thoroughly known, and this thorough knowledge by itself, when worthily pursued, will exercise almost every faculty of the human mind—but the habits, manners, laws, and customs of the people who spoke them must be known also, or we know their language in vain. How wide a field for thought and study offers itself at once! But not to rest there, let us remember that, unlike a poem or a speech, where we know beforehand the tone which will be assumed, and understand the work accordingly, the Scripture contains almost every kind of composition used for every kind of purpose of actual life. We find exhortation, rebuke, warning, precepts, delivered under circumstances often most peculiar and intricate. To understand these aright, we must long have been in the habit of carefully studying the laws which govern human beings, when they address to each other the language of

threatening or command, warning or exhortation ; and the limitations and modifications which circumstances impose on that language, and so notoriously impose, that there is no danger of mistake. These laws we must apply to the particular circumstances of every case, in that spirit of humble reverence which becomes creatures believing that their God has spoken ; but knowing that he addresses them in their own tongue, and their own way ; and earnestly striving by the exertion of those faculties which he has given, under his own guidance to penetrate and develope the meaning of his words. The investigations here hinted at, are of great extent, subtilty, and refinement ; and they depend especially for their success on a knowledge of man. But without them we must constantly misunderstand Scripture, distort its meaning, and mar its harmony, and constantly apply to general cases what was meant for particular circumstances, constantly apply to peculiar, and extraordinary, and extreme cases, what were intended only for general rules. Often, indeed by neglect of this important study, we must make the Scripture of God contradict itself.

With respect to the study of languages itself, if

pursued at all in a worthy spirit, there are few of deeper interest or of greater use. In all cases, the history of languages is the history of the laws of thought; in many cases, it is the only history which we have of nations themselves. It has been, I am well aware, latterly, the fashion to ridicule philology; and the ridicule—that particular class of which Paley speaks, *Contempt before Examination*—as any man may perceive, has done its work, and the higher kind of critical scholarship now possesses only a bare and trembling existence. Yet, if a philologist is only a grammarian, only a collector, I mean, of facts relative to grammar, I confess that I am unable to see why his pursuit, looking to its effects on the mind, is not at least as useful, and as dignified as that of the collector of facts about mineralogy, or chemistry, or geology, who quietly entitles himself a philosopher. Each, in fact, collects materials for others, the one as to words, the other as to things. With every disposition to make concessions, I apprehend that the acuteness required in observing the geological character of a country, and the acuteness required in observing the grammatical laws which regulate the practice of other writers, are qualities not very unlike, either in kind or degree.



Collection of facts imports little or no necessary exercise of the mind in either case, but admits it in both. Philology, at least, offers constant temptation to such exercise, and often produces it. The modern philosopher would unquestionably look at a treatise of four books on the particle *av* with a smile of most self complacent contempt; yet, if he attempted to examine before he scoffed, he might find in the treatise, a subtilty exercised, and trains of thought opened, which it would require no common mind to follow. But, however that may be, Divinity admits not that language should be studied for itself alone. Here the great characteristic of Divinity, that it is the *study of man*, comes in remarkably, and forbids a mere idle exercise of patience and industry. As far as language serves as an exponent of thought, either in general or in individual cases, so far it is gladly pursued to its inmost recesses by the Divine, but, except as an amusement of the faculties, no farther.

But let us consider this more closely. The writings of St. Paul are,—as will be allowed by all who have read them for any other purpose than to dogmatize about them, and establish their own idle and ignorant fancies for the truth, and to

assert for this purpose, that they see as clearly as they see the sun at mid-day, what St. Paul never saw in his own writings—full of difficulty. It is not possible on this occasion to give even an outline of the peculiarities which mark it ; but they who have even a slender acquaintance with the original, will apprehend me when I say, that the suddenness with which the great Apostle takes occasion of the ideas suggested by a single word, to break off a chain of important reasoning, in order to place before those whom he was addressing some truth which he felt to be of yet greater moment, as well as the distance and the peculiar manner in which he often returns and takes up the chain which he had allowed to drop, would alone make the interpretation of his writings a matter of extreme delicacy and difficulty. This difficulty is increased by the fewness of the words in which the rapidity of his wonderful mind often led him to clothe his grand conceptions, so that we have a skeleton, as it were, which we are to clothe with flesh and blood—mere hints, so to speak, and indications from which we are to collect his intention. The dogmatist and the shallow superficial scholar will seldom hesitate, but will decide the point by adopting as certain the conjectures

which their own fancy dictates ; but, as far as human means are concerned, there is but one method by which we can hope to arrive at the truth. That method is a study of his writings, so close and so accurate, that we shall become habituated to the way in which his ideas usually flow, to the manner in which he usually breaks off, continues, or returns to his subject, the points which he usually omits, or marks out in outline only, and thus in a doubtful case we shall know tolerably well what to expect. But what is this ? If it were only to make one's self acquainted with one of the greatest of mere human minds which the world ever saw, to see it swelling with conceptions too vast for human utterance respecting the subjects which concern man's everlasting interests, to follow it to its inmost recesses, and understand its processes and movements, which of us is there who can say, that such a study of such a mind would not expand and exalt his own ? But let it be remembered that this view of the benefit derived from the study of which I speak, is not only inadequate, but absolutely gives no idea of that benefit. Before we can closely investigate the writings of St. Paul, we must be familiar

with the language in which he writes, and not familiar in the ordinary sense only, but critically conversant with its niceties. It would be idle for one who was not so, to give an opinion on matters so delicate as the one in question. What a treasure of improvement is opened to the student in the necessity thus laid upon him for cultivating perhaps the noblest of all the languages of man, of becoming familiar with the laws of thought which guided a people, who still probably stand at the head of all the nations for refinement, for proficiency in all the arts which ennoble man through the medium of the imagination—the nation of poets, of orators, of historians, of philosophers, of painters, of sculptors. Base is the mind, and grovelling the feelings of him who would tell us, that this close and passionate study of Pagan writers, is not fit for the Christian, who cannot see how God works in every quarter, educing good from evil.

How the power, the refinement, the elevation of these glorious minds tend to expand, to refine, to elevate the Christian heart, and make it fitter for its own more lofty work. How like the Jews when they fled from Egypt, we borrow of the heathen, and consecrate the jewels which



they used for earthly vanities to holy and heavenly purposes ;

The orphan'd realm threw wide its gates, and told  
 Into freed Israel's lap her jewels and her gold<sup>1</sup>.

If we turn to the question of *evidences*, we shall find again here a class of studies of a very high and difficult nature, but of a nature eminently requiring a knowledge of the human mind, and eminently leading to a necessity for the acquirement of that knowledge. I do not speak of the examination of the proofs of the truth of our holy religion, for that belongs to all men as well as to the Divine. I speak of the studies of those who are to offer, not to receive the proofs ; that is to say, of the study of those curious and complicated laws of thought which guide us in the reception of truth, and of that marvellous play and interchange of our moral and intellectual qualities, which have always a powerful, and but too often a dangerous *influence* over it. Nor is it only in the case of the cultivated intellect that we are to consider these subtle and delicate questions. Our Lord, at the very outset of his ministry, proclaimed it as the peculiar glory of

<sup>2</sup> Keble.

his Gospel, that it was to be preached to the poor. For them too, unaccustomed as they are to the severities of critical investigation and of logical deductions, but yet of powerful and thoughtful minds, and exposed, like others, to the sophistry of the infidel, it must have, and it has its peculiar evidence, not presenting itself perhaps formally to their understandings, but carrying conviction as well as feeling to their hearts. This evidence is principally the wonderful adaptation of the Gospel system to the wants and requirements of man, and the crying witness thus given that both came from the same hand. But how shall this be known but by deep and close investigation of the human heart, the materials for which are to be found in the intercourse of daily life, in the sick chamber, by the dying bed—by close and minute observation, and by a careful reference of all our observations to the great principles of human nature? Can any study be more *practical* than this?

On the subject of *morals* as a science, it cannot be necessary that I should pause, except for a moment. That science, as we know, “comprehends in it all the obligations, not of human beings alone, but of intelligent creatures uni-

versally in all the relations they can occupy, whether to their Maker or to one another, together with the great original principles, so far as they can be ascertained, from which these obligations arise<sup>1</sup>." To this study the Divine is necessarily led, because it is one of his especial tasks to investigate the obligations of human beings to their Maker. A study at once more practical, more interesting, and more elevating, it is not easy to conceive. Its foundation must be built, if it is to be successfully pursued, on the nicest and closest observation of human nature, and the motives which direct men's consciences and actions. It must be prosecuted by a patient study of the grounds on which many of the most eminent of men in past days (for this, like most of the higher and more intellectual of our studies, has ceased to occupy men's thoughts), endeavoured to build up an enduring system of human obligations, the truths which they thus discovered and imparted, the fallacies by which they were misled. The inquirer, if a candid one, will end in assuring himself, I mean on *reasonable* grounds, that there is no satisfactory system, except that

<sup>1</sup> Wardlaw.

which Scripture presents, of man, as a fallen creature, essentially unable, because he is fallen, to work out a law for himself, and therefore compelled to seek one at the hand of a higher and purer Being than himself.

Let us proceed to *history*. There is hardly any study in which men are more liable to deceive themselves as to its use, from the very fact of its extent, and the great importance of the subject to which it relates. Yet an historian, if he is nothing more, is a mere collector of facts relating to past time, which, as far as the mind is concerned, are of no higher value than any other facts. Of course it may be well to know these facts, in order to avoid falling into troublesome or ridiculous errors on other points. In any other view, it can be of no earthly consequence to know, whether Arius lived in the fourth or the fourteenth century; whether Philip was the father of Alexander or the son. At the best, history so studied is only the hand-maid to other studies, not a very important one itself.

But the Divine *cannot* so study history: so studied, it would have little value for him. "History," says Dionysius, "is philosophy teaching by examples." The Divine looks on it

as *religion* teaching by examples. The moral Governor of the universe administers man in the world of nature, as the incomparable Bishop Butler has proved, by that law which he has laid down for his guidance in the volume of revelation, so rewards and so punishes. The page of history therefore presents an illustration, to say the least, of the mind of God, as unfolded in Scripture. The individual or the nation which rejects God may seem to escape his just punishment; the individual altogether, the nation for a time. But that God is holy and just; that he is holy and abhors sin; that he is just, and will punish it, are lessons which are written in letters of fire in the volume of history—in the awful punishments which have befallen sinners in the mass—in the fearful scourges which have fallen on guilty nations—their extirpation—the scattering of their people to the four winds of heaven—the blotting out their name and place from the face of the earth which they had defiled.

Neither is it only for these awful traces of God that we study history. While he is pleased to address his creatures by judgment and mercy as displayed in his dispensations to them in time, he deals with them also as beings created



for immortality, and, though fallen, capable of improvement and exaltation. The provisions by which he prepares for that improvement are necessarily a main object of the studies of the divine. There is no quarter of them from which he can derive more real and practical improvement. Let him survey mankind from its earliest period to the latest; and the one strong and overwhelming impression is, the *slowness of the progress of truth*: how it struggles for age after age, almost for existence: how hardly it emerges, and how ages again pass away before it becomes recognized and dominant. The lesson comes home to his bosom, and though he may be compelled to stifle his conviction, he knows at once how to value the mountebank devices which expect, in a single generation, to raise nations to a height of wisdom and virtue. While he knows of a certainty that (always humanly speaking) these will fail, he collects, as a Christian patriot, a precious store of materials for directing himself and others in the best, and wisest, and most effectual schemes for benefiting their neighbourhood and their country. But even this is not all, nay, is far from all. Nothing can be well conceived better adapted to enlarge and elevate the mind itself than the



large and comprehensive views which must be taken for the purposes just enumerated. It is, in a word, the study of nations in their progress and decay, as guided by right principles or by wrong ones. And, above all, this part of the study, being conducted on Christian principles, will teach us to look for the influence of Christianity on individuals as well as nations, will warm and cheer our hearts by the pictures which it will present to us of those who, in the cause of God and man, have remembered that it was their duty, and so made it their free choice, to toil, to suffer in patience, and to die. We do not, then, in the low-minded spirit which perpetually disgusts, debases, and chills us, in the dreary intercourse of daily life, entertain and express nothing but mean and base suspicions of every man, and of every body of men. We do not in that loathsome tone and temper believe that no man acts but from selfish and sordid motives: we do not in the hateful spirit of the sneering divine and the scoffing historian, hold up to scorn and suspicion all on whom the pen of history dwells; but in a sincere and firm belief of the influence of Christian faith, and of its power to sanctify and raise the human heart, we

look for, we recognize, and we hang with fond delight, over the pages which record the struggles, the sufferings, and the victory of the patriot, the saint, and the martyr.

But it is said that *controversy* is an unfruitful branch of our study. In good truth, if it is pursued as it often has been, merely to blacken an adversary, and to show that he is bad as well as mistaken, it is not unfruitful, but it bears a bitter and poisonous fruit. But if pursued in a different spirit, this charge can result from ignorance only. I know few things more instructive than controversy, when pursued upon right principles, for worthy ends, and under the control of Christian feelings. I allude not to controversy with the swarm of sects which have sprung up in modern times, which neither appeal to the Church universal, to primitive antiquity, to fathers, to councils, nor pretend to rest their views on any foundation of deep learning or sound interpretation, and which, instead of adopting the right and admirable precept of Vincent of Lirens, “*Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus,*” have chosen for their motto, “*Quod nunquam, quod nusquam, quod a nobismet ipsis.*” No profit can arise from controversy where there is no-

thing to oppose, but the resolute decision to adopt those views which are agreeable to the fancy or temper. I allude to a different class of controversies, and shall best explain my meaning by an instance. Let us look back to a controversy which disturbed the peace of the Church for centuries, prevailed to an enormous extent, and produced frightful mischiefs ;—I mean the *Arian* controversy<sup>1</sup>. The superficial reader or thinker will amuse himself with laughing at the folly which could induce men, so little disagreed in some cases, to range themselves in an hostile attitude, because one used the word *ὁμοούσιον*, where the other preferred *ὁμοιούσιον*. But a student of another mind will feel that he can draw lessons of a far different kind and value from the scene presented to him. He will know that much seed must have been sown, before so full a harvest of error could be reaped. He will study the philosophy and literature which were in vogue at the time, and trace, as he unquestionably can in this case, the unfavourable influence which each had on the

<sup>1</sup> Let me take this occasion of offering my grateful thanks to Mr. Newman for his invaluable work on Arianism, which will take its permanent stand in our literature.

religious feelings and opinions of the age. He will look to the schools of the Sophists, and see the evil of men allowing themselves to dispute every truth, to look on all things as mere food for the exercise of ingenuity, and to hold their own private judgments as the rule and law of truth. He will see the yet greater evil, in an age when the mind is much fixed on material science, of allowing that class of sciences to prescribe the tests and standards for trying moral and spiritual truths. Turning next to the Eclectic school, he will learn a lesson, required, alas ! in every age, —he will see how unwillingly the pride of man receives the gift of revelation,—how when we will not quite spurn it, and cannot deny its value as a guide of life, we try to rob it of its eminent character, speak of it as only repeating more positively the truths which man's own wisdom has suggested in all ages, and assert that Christianity is as old as the creation. He will trace how we then proceed to rob it of its peculiar character as a revelation, explain its mysteries away into mere mystical expressions of errors and truths, and consider it as a moral dispensation, one among many, which may borrow as well as give. He will learn how, having thus robbed it of all its chief claims to

love and reverence, we cease to love and reverence that which is most adapted of all things to kindle fervent love and reverence, and to carry the mind beyond its own narrow confines, and thus reduce ourselves to that condition of mind most agreeable to the pride of the heart, a cold, proud, godless indifference to every thing without, and an idolatrous worship of every thing within. The Eclectic of the early ages is only the Neologist of this. The same root of bitterness and pride will always bear the same accursed fruit of indifference to God and all good, and a worship of self. It was to the *sceptical* character of his heresy, the advantage of which he had learned in the schools of the sophists, and to the general, though it may be, tacit, spread of a sceptical spirit through the disputative nature of those schools, that Arius owed the rapid and wide circulation of his opinions, while the Eclectics had obviously prepared his way in another quarter, by their teaching men to reject all mysteries in religion. Rightly studied and understood, therefore, the Arian controversy, instead of showing that men are ready to dispute, to mistake one another, and sometimes to dispute most where they differ least, teaches us the great practical lesson, that



erroneous exercise of the intellectual powers, though apparently mere exercise, cannot be pursued with impunity, nay, that it leads to the most mischievous consequences. It teaches us that the pseudo-liberalism which makes men wish well to all opinions, is only another name for indifference, and instead of caring for all, means, in fact, being careless about all, and so paves the way for giving up all, yea, finally, the vital and essential truths of religion itself.

But we may go yet farther as to controversy. There are certain questions which have produced much painful discussion among Christians of all churches, and will, in all human probability, continue for ever to do so, just as they produced discussion in the schools of the philosophers long before Christianity was sent into the world. I allude to the obscure and insoluble questions about the freedom or the slavery of man in his will; which, like obscure and too often frightful phantoms, flit around the gulf of that unfathomable mystery, *the origin of evil*. The conclusion to which the sound mind usually comes, is, doubtless, that these are things lying beyond the sphere of man's capacity; and that whatever may be seen through a glass darkly, nothing can be *known*. Yet shall we say, there-



fore, that the time which has been spent on them, where the necessary powers, and cultivation, and leisure are found, has been spent in vain ? Not so, for it has been spent in investigating accurately the extent and the limits of man's powers, their real strength, and their real weakness ; and in teaching him to bow in humble reverence before that awful Being in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The violent or the weak mind may be led, perhaps, by its fervour or its impotence, to plunge into extremes, and to adopt some hypothesis which recommends itself by its violence. But to those who study, who contemplate, and who discuss the great points presented to them in the right and Christian tone of mind, I know few things more likely, than the hopelessness of these controversies, to bring them to the state in which they ought to be,—that state which practically appears to be the summit of human wisdom, as well as of human happiness ; but at which there seems to be but one way of arriving. I mean that state where we are possessed by the full conviction that we cannot by searching find out these deeper truths to perfection ; that the only way of understanding truth, is by practising it ; that practically we shall know exactly according

to our moral condition, and no more ; and that gradually the intellect will be so framed and moulded by the moral tastes and feelings, as to be ready for that fuller measure of light which we believe and hope will dawn on it, when it rises from the grave and gate of death to the light and the glory of immortality.

It cannot be necessary for me to proceed. The Divine, as I have shown, is led to study history, morals, metaphysics, and he is led by the study of languages, at once to investigate the laws of thought which guide man's mind, and to exalt his powers and kindle his imagination by the works of men of matchless genius. All these studies are to be pursued with the strictest reference to practice ; nay, they cannot be pursued for the especial purpose for which they are wanted, except in union with the strictest observation of human nature. In offering proofs of the truth of the religion which he presses on man's acceptance, he is compelled to observe the close connexion of the moral and intellectual frame ; in dissipating the errors of opponents of the truth, he is led to view the consequences to man at large of our indulgence in intellectual error ; he is taught, yea, compelled by the very nature of his studies

to value all things only with reference to a higher and more enduring existence. I would ask, if all this is so, not whether others should embrace this study, but whether we need fear to own and to pursue it. I would ask boldly whether any man who knows to what it relates, will venture to say that it is not a full and a worthy employment for the very highest intellect which God ever bestowed on man. I would ask boldly whether any man who knows to what it relates, will venture to say that it is not *useful*. I would ask boldly whether any man who knows to what it relates, and who knows too what man is, what his powers are, and whither he is going to give an account of them, will venture, whatever he may choose to do in practice, in theory to compare with it, any or all the sciences which compose the train of natural science?

Science, in its *own* place, has, beyond all question, a value and a dignity which require no praise from any man. No man of sound mind will venture to throw discredit on the arts which can tend to increase the happiness and comfort of mankind, far less to depreciate the sciences which display to us the wisdom of the Creator in its wonderful variety, as exercised in the system of the universe. Every Divine is

aware, that as a handmaid to theology, in pointing out the footsteps of God's love and wisdom in every quarter, (and more especially if in giving the knowledge it assists in producing and confirming the proper emotions of love and devotion, at these displays of love and wisdom) it is entitled to all respect and all gratitude.

It is when it transgresses its proper limits, and seeks to usurp what rightfully belongs to other studies,—when it claims all attention, while it deserves only a limited share,—when it professes to be the best discipline of the mind, while it is always a partial and often a dangerous cultivation of the faculties, that its encroachments must be watched and unceremoniously resisted. When its votaries pass their proper bounds, and seek to depreciate the studies which formed the best and brightest of intellects in past days, and might form the best and brightest intellects now, they must be reminded, that they direct man's thoughts to outward matter, we to the soul within,—they to that which perishes, we to that which endures,—they to the narrow confines of the present, we to the wide domain of the past and the future,—they to that which they can touch, and taste, and handle, we to the delicate processes which defy the coarser test of the

senses. They would keep man in the world of sense, we would lift him to the world of spirits. They would treat him as if the grave were the last home appointed for all living, we would lift his thoughts to a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens. They would treat him as a perishing member of a perishing race, we as the immortal child of an immortal father. They would fill his thoughts and occupy his whole soul with what relates to the body, and to luxury, and to money, we would prepare him for communion with the great Author of light, and life, and wisdom, and glory. They would fain direct all thoughts and eyes to the fair Temple of Science, —bright and beautiful indeed is its aspect, and fair and exquisite are its proportions, but, like the icy palaces of the regions of the north, they will melt and vanish away, under the influence of a more genial atmosphere and a warmer sun ; we would fain direct all thoughts and eyes to another building, the first stone of which was laid on Calvary, which has been built up and cemented with the blood of saints and martyrs, which will one day open its everlasting portals wide to all climates and countries, which will be their happy home, and will continue in its brightness and its beauty for ever.



Well has that glorious building been set before us by the great poet who is the glory and blessing of our age:—

In my mind's eye, a Temple, like a cloud  
 Slowly surmounting some invidious hill,  
 Rose out of darkness : the bright work stood still,  
 And might of its own beauty have been proud ;  
 But it was fashioned, and to God was vowed  
 By virtues that diffused, in every part,  
 Spirit divine thro' forms of human art ;

Faith had her arch—her arch when winds blow loud  
 Into the consciousness of safety thrilled ;  
 And Love her towers of dread foundation laid  
 Under the grave of things ; Hope had her spire  
 Star high—and pointed still to something higher ;  
 Trembling I gazed, but heard a voice—It said,  
 Hell-gates are powerless phantoms when we build.

THE END.





